

The embodiments of the invention in which an exclusive property or privilege is claimed are defined as follows:

1. An anchoring device for securing a cover to the ground, comprising:

a body in the form of a living creature having an upper end portion and a lower end portion in which the upper or lower end portions are integral with the body and located remote from each other at opposite ends of the body,

wherein the upper end portion of the body includes an integral first feature forming a first half of an anchoring clamp, and

wherein the lower end portion of the body includes an integral second feature forming a stake, the stake being positioned at the end of the lower end portion of the body and configured to secure the body to the ground when the stake is inserted into the ground,

the anchoring device further comprising a third feature forming a second half of the anchoring clamp, in which the third feature is not integral with the body but engages the body at a position opposite the first half of the anchoring clamp, the first and second halves of the anchoring clamp cooperating to secure a cover to the body, and

wherein the first and third features forming the anchoring clamp and the second feature forming the stake are configured of natural parts or appendages of the living creature.

2. The anchoring device of Claim 1, wherein the natural part or appendage of the living creature forming the anchoring clamp is comprised of the creature's mouth, in which the first and third features, respectively, comprise an upper portion and a lower portion of the creature's mouth.

3. The anchoring device of Claim 1, wherein the natural part or appendage of the living creature forming the anchoring clamp is comprised of arms or legs of the creature that occur in the upper end portion of the body.

4. The anchoring device of Claim 3, wherein the first feature is comprised of a first arm or leg and the third feature is comprised of a second arm or leg, the anchoring device further comprising a biasing mechanism that exerts a force which biases the first

arm or leg and the second arm or leg together to provide a clamping force for the anchoring clamp.

5. The anchoring device of Claim 1, wherein the first feature is comprised of a portion of the body and the third feature is comprised of an arm or leg of the creature, the anchoring device further comprising a biasing mechanism that exerts a force which biases the arm or leg toward the body to provide the clamping force of the anchoring clamp.

6. The anchoring device of Claim 1, wherein the natural part or appendage of the living creature forming the stake is comprised of a tail that occurs in the lower end portion of the body.

7. The anchoring device of Claim 1, wherein the natural part or appendage of the living creature forming the stake is comprised of one or more legs that occur in the lower end portion of the body.

8. The anchoring device of Claim 1, wherein the second half of the anchoring clamp is hingedly attached to the body opposite the first half of the anchoring clamp.

9. The anchoring device of Claim 8, wherein the pivot point of the hinge is positioned within the upper end portion of the body remote from the second feature forming the stake.

10. The anchoring device of Claim 1, wherein the first half of the anchoring clamp further includes protrusions that mate with protrusions on the second half of the anchoring clamp.

11. The anchoring device of Claim 10 wherein the protrusions on the first and second halves of the anchoring clamp are teeth that occur in the mouth of the creature.

12. The anchoring device of Claim 10, wherein the protrusions on the first and second halves of the anchoring claim are fingers or toes that occur on arms or legs of the creature.

13. The anchoring device of Claim 1, wherein the body of the living creature is formed with a cavity to accept material that adds weight to the body to further facilitate securing the body to the ground.

14. The anchoring device of Claim 1, wherein the non-integral third feature is configured in two or more parts that each engage the body at a position opposite the first half of the anchoring clamp and cooperate with the first half of the anchoring clamp to secure a cover to the body.

15. The anchoring device of Claim 14, wherein each part of the third feature is comprised of an arm or leg of the creature.

16. The anchoring device of Claim 14, further comprising two or more biasing mechanisms, in which a biasing mechanism is associated with each part of the third feature to exert a force that biases the part of the third feature toward the first feature and provide a clamping force for the anchoring clamp.

17. The anchoring device of Claim 1, further comprising a hook-and-loop material disposed on the first and third features to facilitate securing the cover to the body.

18. The anchoring device of Claim 1, wherein the second feature forming a stake further comprises a hook feature configured to facilitate securing the stake to the ground when the stake is inserted into the ground.

19. The anchoring device of Claim 1, wherein the second feature forming a stake is configured in two or more parts positioned at the end of the lower end portion of the body, in which each of the two or more parts forms separate stakes that are configured to secure the body to the ground when the stakes are inserted into the ground.

20. The anchoring device of Claim 19, wherein each part of the second feature forming a stake is comprised of a leg of the creature.